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**An Illustrated Fern Flora of West Himalaya, Volume I**, by S. P. Khullar. 1994. International Book Distributors, 9/3, Rajpur Road, Dehra Dun—248001, India. ISBN 81-7089-136-1. [Price unknown] 506 pp.

The flora consists of approximately 325 fern species from the western Himalayas of India and Pakistan, (72°–81°E Long.). Vol. I treats 169 species, 4 varieties, plus 10 hybrids in 28 families, following a finely cut hierarchy of Pichi-Sermolli and Ching. The text is well documented (38 pp. bibliography), easy to read, and arranged in conjunction with 168 plates of line drawings, xerographic halftones, or silhouettes. The absence of halftone photographic images makes spore surfaces difficult to visualize; some illustrations are coarsely drawn, hampering interpretation.

The descriptions are excellent; particularly helpful are the boldface diagnostic features. The keys to families, genera, species or varieties are constructed in a clear manner, facilitating their use. Synonymy, chromosome number, habitat, elevation, and distribution data within and without the region are simply stated, often followed with a taxonomic discussion.

This flora presents the results of over 25 years of collection and research by the author. Efforts to integrate the flora with information on neighboring areas and taxonomic opinions of monographic experts are evident. The book presents a significant contribution that demonstrates how far pteridology has progressed from the alternative floras for the region, all of which were published in the nineteenth century. The writing of this flora was difficult, with types deposited in European herbaria and not easily available to Indian workers, but many researchers are noted for their gracious assistance. The author refers to the work as a "humble beginning"; it is much more than that. It is an excellent contribution that makes a complete fern flora of India closer to reality.—JAMES H. PECK, Department of Biology, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, 2801 S. University Ave., Little Rock, AR 72204.

**Die Moos- und Farnpflanzen Europas**, by W. Frey, J.-P. Frahm, E. Fischer, and W. Lobin. 1995. Gustav Fischer Verlag, New York. ISBN 3-437-30756-8. [Price unknown] 426 pp. In German.

This handy little book contains excellent illustrations and keys to the bryophytes and pteridophytes of Europe. The geographic coverage extends eastward to the Urals, southward to the Bosphorus, and attendant oceanic islands of a conventional definition of Europe. The illustrations are precise, stippled,



and diagnostic. The keys are set as flush-left, paired couplets, a manner common in zoology and a practice more botanists need to acquire.

The pteridophytes are treated on pages 319–391. Authors Eberhard Fischer and Wolfram Lobin have prepared an excellent means to identify even the difficult groups through judicious comparative figures and characters of pinnae and pinnules. When spore surface features are required, as with the quillworts, the illustrations provided are of such quality as to complement the language in the keys. The taxonomic treatment is replete with hybrids, subspecies and other infraspecific categories to provide the reader with a sense that not much significant variation has been excluded.

This book is of special interest and utility to those who also notice bryophytes, as they are treated equally well. It also contains a list of checklists and floras that pertain to the included regions. The index combines bryophytes and pteridophytes; separate listings would have provided a convenient, alphabetic checklist for each group. The volume is hardbound, well-constructed, and will be of service in the field. This title is most serviceable and is recommended.—JAMES H. PECK, Department of Biology, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, 2801 S. University Ave., Little Rock, AR 72204.